

# THE EFFICIENCY OF THE BOLSHEVSKI

## All Night Argument in Cell and Threats to Execute Priests Failed to Force Him to Resign as Patriarch—Fraud Then Used, Unknown to People, to Seize Church for Communists

This is the second and concluding chapter of an article on the overthrow of the Russian Orthodox Church by the Bolshevik Government. The first part told how, using alleged opposition to the famine relief as a pretext, the Bolsheviks had seized the churches, imprisoned the Patriarch and bishops and executed priests. Also how a group of renegade clergy had testified against the Patriarch and under the guidance and domination of the Bolsheviks had taken over the church organization.

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Moscow, Nov. 1.

ACCORDING to the official report of May 12, the Archbishop Vedensky, the priests Kallinovskiy, Krasnitskiy and Byelkov and the Preceptor Stradnik made their way to the Troitskiy monastery, the greatest in Russia, if not in the world, to see the Patriarch, who was under arrest there. (He is now under arrest in the Donoski monastery, near Moscow.) Krasnitskiy, the Patriarch's chief assistant, was the one who acted against the Soviet power. "Under your guidance, Patriarch Tikhon," said Krasnitskiy, "the church has fallen into complete anarchy. By your counter-revolutionary policy and particularly by your opposition to the confiscation of the church's valuables, it has lost all authority and all influence over the people. I call upon you to summon immediately a general assembly of the church and to cease completely administering the church until that assembly has given its decision."

Such is the Bolshevik story, which adds that "after some reflection the Patriarch decided to resign, with the transfer of his powers to one of the higher hierarchs until such time as the church assembly met." The official statement carefully refrains from giving the name of the higher hierarch to whom Tikhon transferred his powers; and the general impression made by that statement is that the Patriarch admitted the truth of the charges made against him by Father Krasnitskiy and agreed to submit himself to the judgment of the proposed assembly.

### The Actual Happenings of

#### That Night in the Monastery

THE NEW YORK HERALD correspondent has been able to obtain from the highest source a full and authentic account of what happened on this occasion. It comes in a confidential note from an eyewitness and I give it here.

The priests mentioned above came to the Patriarch late at night and made him get out of bed. His Holiness came in a nervous and disturbed state of mind, but when he saw who were waiting for him he quickly regained possession of himself. The Bolshevik priests intimated that as a result of his arrest the church would remain without supreme guidance; but that as the Government would not permit any bishop proposed by the Patriarch to replace him it would be better if he named, as temporary acting Patriarch, Bishop Antonine, in whom the civil power had complete confidence. This Tikhon refused to do. Then the priests gave him to understand that, should he persist in this decision, all the eleven condemned priests would be executed, whereas if he obliged the Government by appointing Antonine as his successor their pardon was possible.

Some present or future Russian painter will be able perhaps to do justice to this scene and make of it a worthy companion picture to that awful one in the Tretyakovskiy Gallery at Moscow, where John the Terrible is represented as embracing the body of his son, whom he himself murdered.

Scene. Night. A monk's cell in the great Troitskiy monastery. On one side the old Patriarch, holy, but weak and simple minded. On the other side a group of debauched Communist priests who had all of them been police spies, urging the Patriarch to appoint as his successor, with unlimited power over the ancient Church of Russia, a degenerate Archbishop who was secretly associated with the Bolshevik leaders and who was, moreover, of unsound intellect.

The argument lasted all night. Finally Krasnitskiy pointed out that the Patriarch was a prisoner. Under the circumstances he should, in accordance with the ordinance made by the supreme church administration on November 7, 1920, hand over his power to one of the two substitutes put forward at that time. These were Agafangel, the Metropolitan of Yaroslavl, and Vennamin, the Metropolitan of Petrograd. The Patriarch agreed to hand over his powers to one of these two, leaving the selection to the Government. The priests asserted that the Metropolitan Vennamin would never be allowed to take over the administration, but that there was no objection to the Metropolitan Agafangel. They also assured the Patriarch that the civil power would put no obstacle in the way of a general church assembly. The idea of calling such an assembly was welcomed, indeed, by the Patriarch. According to the ordinance of the 1917-1918 assembly, which reestablished the Patriarchate in Russia, assemblies were to be summoned by the Patriarch every three years.

As a result of this long conversation, which lasted until daylight, the Patriarch signed with his own hand two documents, a letter to "Comrade" Kallinovskiy, president of the All-Russian Central Executive Committee, and a letter to the Metropolitan Agafangel. The text of the first ran as follows:

13th May, 1922.  
In view of the extremely difficult position of the church administration, which is the result of my having been summoned before a civil court, I consider it in the interests of the church for me to place temporarily—that is, until the church assembly has been summoned—the head of the church administration after Agafangel, Metropolitan of Yaroslavl, or Vennamin, Metropolitan of Petrograd.

Patriarch Tikhon.

In his second letter the Patriarch in-

## CHARGED WITH TREASON BY THE REDS



PATRIARCH TIKHON.

arch, and they finally obtained those powers by deceit.

Then the new group set about to strengthen its own position. Even now the only Bishop to join since its formation had been Leonid who hastened to procure its own creature. It had already consecrated bishops Fathers Chantzev and Albinov. On the other hand, it expelled those bishops who opposed them or the Government. Archbishop Nikander was thus expelled from the archiepiscopal chair at Moscow, though no ecclesiastical trial was attributed to him, while even several courts had not condemned him. It did the same to Vennamin, the Metropolitan of Petrograd, who had communicated the following Petrograd priests subordinate to him: Vedensky, Krasnitskiy and Byelkov.

Vennamin next attempted to carry out the decree of the supreme church administration of November 7, 1920, and declared that the Petrograd Sea being deprived of the possibility of receiving orders from the Patriarch, would be managed by its bishops, independent of the new church power. The immediate result of this bold move on Vennamin's part was his arrest, and the *lavestia* hastened to add the threat that "a Metropolitan should be very careful. In Petrograd the trial of the church people for resisting the Government is only beginning. The Metropolitan of Petrograd, who had his humble brethren, has done all that he could to insure that the trials will end with severe sentences than those passed at Moscow. And the central figure in these Petrograd trials will be the Metropolitan himself. This he should not have forgotten."

Now these Petrograd trials are ending in a death sentence is threatening the Metropolitan. The heads of the "reformed" church are not shy of using police methods to obtain recognition of their power, and the priest hood, terrified by the arrests, trials and shootings, cannot make up its mind to act openly against the "reformers."

The priests of the old church, having no longer a center of union in the person of the bishop, act without confidence or harmony. But the faithful have shown hostility to the usurpers at public discussions instituted by the "initiative group" to propagate the new church policy. Three of these overflow meetings took place in the hall of the Conservatoire, holding 3,000 persons. Statements and discussions accompanied by continual outbursts against the "reformers," who were called "traitors," "Jews," "murderers," and asked "How much are you being paid by the secret police?" Bishop Antonine and Leonide were overwhelmed with insults on leaving the church after the service. May 23 was set for the consecration of Father Albinov as bishop, the ceremony to be performed by Bishops Antonine, Leonide and Ionnannika. But from early morning thousands of people blocked the entry to the cathedral, so that neither the bishops nor the candidates (who had been warned before) dared appear in the cathedral, and the laying on of hands had to take place in the small chapel of the Patriarch. Not long ago a woman in Petrograd threw a stone at the High Priest Vedensky, wounding him in the head.

### Metropolitan of Petrograd

#### Is Put in Prison for Treason

On May 19 the Patriarch Tikhon went in an ordinary carriage without guard through all Moscow to the Donoski Monastery. He stopped at the famous Iverskiy shrine to pray before the Blessed Icon, Virgin Mother, before leaving the shrine he blessed the assembled people. When he entered the Donoski Monastery all the entries and exits were closed by Red soldiers. The "progressive priests" seized his rooms as soon as he left them. The Bolshevik representatives removed the seals from the archives in Cherevny and then handed over to the "progressive priests" the whole machinery of the church administration.

"The progressive priests," partly from Moscow, partly from other towns, do not enjoy much respect of the laity, but they made an effort to obtain assistance of the best Moscow clergyman, Kallinovskiy, Vedensky and Krasnitskiy went around to such of the bishops who were not in jail, inviting them to join their group and scattering everywhere the most deceptive promises. They appealed to Bishop Ilarion and V. V. Guriev, secretary of the Supreme Church Administration, both in prison, promising them immediate release and quashing of the prosecution pending against them, but they only succeeded in winning over Bishop Leonide, an insignificant personage. To have some shadow of right to administration of the church they needed powers of some kind, from the Patriarch.

The tasks of the assembly will be: (1) To judge and depose the Patriarch for his anti-Government actions. The civil power will try to show it is trying the Patriarch not as head of the Orthodox Church, but as a political

criminal. But civil power will not prosecute until the Patriarch is de-throned and unfrocked. Even now the only Bishop to join since its formation had been Leonid who hastened to procure its own creature. It had already consecrated bishops Fathers Chantzev and Albinov. On the other hand, it expelled those bishops who opposed them or the Government. Archbishop Nikander was thus expelled from the archiepiscopal chair at Moscow, though no ecclesiastical trial was attributed to him, while even several courts had not condemned him. It did the same to Vennamin, the Metropolitan of Petrograd, who had communicated the following Petrograd priests subordinate to him: Vedensky, Krasnitskiy and Byelkov.

(2) This unfortunate country, torn to pieces, has its only symbol of unity in the Patriarch. In him is the national center to which it tends. This is no secret to the Soviet Government. So the assembly, after having condemned the Patriarch, unfrocked him, given him back his name in the world and driven him forth from sanctuary in order that he may be seized by the Bolshevik police and tried for his life as a political criminal, will then declare that the monarchical principle has had its day for the church also. In other words, they will do away with the recently established Patriarchate, decapitate the church and replace the Patriarch by a synod; that is, by an impersonal and arbitrarily composed Soviet of bishops, priests and laymen—Jackies of the Government, which is already waxing enthusiastic over the advantages of the synodal system—as if "Comrades" Bronstein & Co. cared for any system of church government.

(3) The third clause of the assembly program touches on the relations between the new church and the State. "The separation of church and State must be recognized by the church, distinctly, unalterably, once and for all." But this separation is conceived in the somewhat original form of a complete subordination of the church to the civil power. Patriarch Tikhon dwelt on that very point when I saw him in April, 1920. "The State has separated itself from the church," he said to me, "and I think it has acted wisely. This separation is conceived in the somewhat original form of a complete subordination of the church to the civil power. Patriarch Tikhon dwelt on that very point when I saw him in April, 1920. 'The State has separated itself from the church,' he said to me, 'and I think it has acted wisely. This separation is conceived in the somewhat original form of a complete subordination of the church to the civil power. 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